



Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

What Is Claimed Is:

1. (cancelled)

2. (currently amended) An apparatus for controlling a microscope stage assembly comprising:

an upper stage; a slide mount; a rod; and, a releasable attachment means, where said releasable attachment means is arranged to attach said rod to said slide mount, said upper stage is arranged to move in a first direction in response to a movement of said rod in said first direction, and said slide mount is arranged to move in a second direction, orthogonal to said first direction, in response to a movement of said rod in said second direction ~~The apparatus recited in Claim 1 wherein said bidirectional, ergonomic stage movement means comprises a substantially solid, circular rod with releasable attachment means.~~

3. (currently amended) The apparatus recited in Claim 2 [[1]] wherein said ~~bidirectional, ergonomic stage movement means~~ rod comprises a substantially hollow, circular tube with releasable attachment means.

4. (original) The apparatus recited in Claim 2 wherein said releasable attachment means is selected from a group consisting of a screws, rivets, magnets, adhesive, hook-and-eyes, and springed detents.

5. (currently amended) The apparatus recited in Claim 2 [[1]] wherein said ~~bidirectional, ergonomic stage movement means~~ rod comprises a distal portion, an intermediate portion and a proximal portion.

6. (currently amended) The apparatus recited in Claim 5 [[1]], wherein said proximal portion is attached to said ~~stage assembly~~ slide mount, said intermediate portion connects said

distal and said proximal portion, and said distal portion is disposed in space substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said stage assembly.

7. (currently amended) The apparatus recited in Claim 2 [[1]] wherein said ~~bidirectional, ergonomic stage movement means~~ rod further comprises a gripping means operatively arranged to be detachably secured to said ~~bidirectional, ergonomic stage movement means~~ rod.

8. (currently amended) The apparatus recited in Claim [[1]] 2 further comprising:
a joystick, wherein said releasable attachment means is arranged to attach said joystick to said slide mount wherein said bidirectional, ergonomic stage movement means comprises a joystick.

9. (currently amended) The apparatus recited in Claim 2 [[1]] wherein said ~~bidirectional, ergonomic stage movement means~~ rod comprises ~~a rod with~~ a plurality of grooves disposed in space substantially parallel to one another.

10. (currently amended) The apparatus recited in Claim 2 [[1]] wherein said ~~bidirectional, ergonomic stage movement means~~ rod comprises ~~a rod with~~ a plurality of protuberances disposed in space substantially parallel to one another.

11. (currently amended) The apparatus recited in Claim 2 [[1]] wherein said ~~bidirectional, ergonomic stage movement means~~ rod comprises a one-piece, pre-formed substantially solid rod with a releasable attachment means.

12. (original) The apparatus recited in Claim 6, wherein said distal portion comprises a substantially solid, circular pole with a plurality of grooves disposed in space substantially parallel to one another.

13. (original) The apparatus recited in Claim 6, wherein said distal portion comprises a substantially solid, circular pole which tapers at the end.

14. (original) The apparatus recited in Claim 7, wherein said gripping means comprises a substantially hollow tube with a plurality of grooves disposed in space substantially parallel to one another.

15. (currently amended) The apparatus recited in Claim [[7]] 5, wherein said gripping means comprises a substantially square, rotatable plate operatively arranged to be detachably secured to [[a]] said distal portion of said rod stage movement means.

16. (currently amended) A microscope stage movement means comprising:

an upper stage;

a slide mount;

at least one substantially linear, rounded shaft with an attachment end and a gripping end;
and,

a releasable attachment means, where said releasable attachment means is arranged to releasably attach said shaft to said slide mount, said upper stage is arranged to move in a first direction in response to a movement of said shaft in said first direction, and said slide mount is arranged to move in a second direction, orthogonal to said first direction, in response to a movement of said shaft in said second direction wherein said attachment end is operatively arranged to be detachably secured to a microscope stage assembly.

17. (currently amended) An interchangeable microscope stage movement device for providing X and Y movement of a sample comprising:

~~a microscope stage assembly; and,~~

an upper stage;

a slide mount; and,

a joystick detachably secured to said ~~stage assembly~~ slide mount at more than one location of said ~~stage assembly~~ slide mount.

18. (new) The apparatus recited in Claim 2 further comprising:

a slide mount guide fixedly connected to said slide mount, where said releasable attachment means is arranged to attach said rod to said slide mount guide.